

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-10. (Cancelled)

11. (New) A method for operating a metering valve which sets a flow rate of a reagent to be introduced into an exhaust gas area of an internal combustion engine, the method comprising:

providing a diagnosis of the metering valve including an analysis of a measure of a flow rate on the basis of a pressure difference during a diagnosis time;

after an occurrence of a diagnosis start signal, bringing the reagent to a predefined diagnosis start pressure while the metering valve is kept closed;
then setting the metering valve at a predefined flow rate; and
analyzing the pressure difference occurring during the diagnosis time.

12. (New) The method according to claim 11, further comprising:

starting the diagnosis with the start signal, which triggers a diagnosis device; and

analyzing an amount of reagent dispensed by the metering valve during the diagnosis time and collected in a graduated breaker.

13. (New) The method according to claim 11, further comprising:

fixedly predefining the pressure difference; and
providing a warning signal when the diagnosis time exceeds a predefined diagnosis time limit.

14. (New) The method according to claim 11, further comprising:

fixedly predefining the diagnosis time; and
supplying a warning signal when the pressure difference exceeds a predefined pressure difference limit during the diagnosis time.

15. (New) The method according to claim 11, further comprising providing an adaptation of a metering valve signal delivered by a metering control unit to the metering valve during metering operation as a function of the ascertained measure for the flow rate.

16. (New) The method according to claim 11, further comprising providing an adaptation of a metering valve signal delivered by a metering control unit to the metering valve during metering operation as a function of the pressure difference.

17. (New) The method according to claim 11, further comprising starting the diagnosis with at least one of: (a) a first diagnosis start signal supplied by an internal combustion engine control unit, (b) a second diagnosis start signal supplied by a freeze cycle counter, (c) a third diagnosis start signal supplied by an after-running control unit, and (d) a fourth diagnosis start signal supplied by a diagnosis device.

18. (New) A device for operating a metering valve which sets a flow rate of a reagent to be introduced into an exhaust gas area of an internal combustion engine, the device comprising a diagnosis control unit for performing the following:

- providing a diagnosis of the metering valve including an analysis of a measure of a flow rate on the basis of a pressure difference during a diagnosis time;
- after an occurrence of a diagnosis start signal, bringing the reagent to a predefined diagnosis start pressure while the metering valve is kept closed;
- then setting the metering valve at a predefined flow rate; and
- analyzing the pressure difference occurring during the diagnosis time.